
**Bay, Rivers and Watersheds Coordination Team
Minutes of the Meeting held February 22, 2006**

Team Members Present: W. Michael Sullivan, PhD., DEM; Juan Mariscal, WRB; Mike Walker, EDC; Kevin Flynn, DOA; Jeff Willis, CRMC; Tom Uva, NBC; Sharon Pavignano, RI Rivers Council.

Other Attendees: Susan Kiernan, DEM; Margherita Pryor, EPA; Chip Young, URI; Jane Austin, Save The Bay; Don Pryor, SAC; Kip Bergstrom, EPC; Arianna McBride, EPA; Tom Ardito, NBEP; Mark Adelman, Governor's Office

Meeting Opened: 3:10 pm

Discussion of minutes tabled.

M.Sullivan reviewed progress on development of job description for the Chair- CT position indicating that Human Resource staff have reviewed and okayed the current description. Approximately \$135,000 in total for the FTE which is assigned in the 2007 budget to DEM. About \$195,000 for two FTEs (chair and assistant). K.Flynn inquired about position being in DEM budget. M. Sullivan indicated he had previously communicated the suggestion that the position is better suited to be part of Governor's staff, but position and funding in 2007 state budget remain a part of DEM budget.

M. Sullivan requested CT members review and comment on the draft PowerPoint presentation regarding the additional funding request for FY2007 during the next week. Suggestions and comments should be directed to Mike Sullivan and Sue Kiernan. M. Sullivan noted that basis for environmental needs appears very sound, but is less clear for economic monitoring. The last page regarding administrative support was treated as a placeholder pending further direction from the CT. K. Flynn complimented the work to date on the draft.

CT discussed whether and how to prioritize the requests for support previously received by the CT. M. Walker indicated with funding so tight, it would be difficult to add on positions without adequate justification. J. Mariscal said legislators won't know what needs are if we don't tell them. K.Flynn indicated it's an interesting dilemma – if other funding isn't forthcoming then may lessen need for executive director. M. Sullivan indicated that EPA has expectations that DEM needs to address monitoring and that much of the pending proposal will help do that. J. Mariscal indicated legislators giving guidance to make them aware of needs and he intends to do so with respect to stream gages. M. Walker noted requests from committees were primarily for part-time support. He suggested using the assistant to the chair to support committee work. Preferred using the two budgeted positions as the first step and seeing what can be done with that level of support. M. Sullivan noted that may work for staff needs but that the economic monitoring request was for contractual services, not staffing. Proposal was for \$80,000 with

\$20,000 in in-kind matching support from the EPC. T. Uva raised issue of CT budget being presented in unified fashion to avoid confusion/clouding the issue in individual department budget hearings. J. Mariscal agreed and M. Sullivan agreed that at some point in time need the team (top representatives) going to hearing. J. Willis indicated he thought pursuing monitoring funds first and showing we can do the job is the better way to go and may lay the groundwork for showing additional staffing needs in the future. K. Flynn inquired about the vehicle for the any fiscal change. M. Sullivan indicated it would likely be an amendment to a budget article. Motion was made to add \$80,000 for the economic monitoring proposal to the pending fiscal request regarding environmental monitoring. (Motion - M. Walker; second – T. Uva) All CT members voted to approve the motion.

J. Mariscal presented an update on the issue of streamflow gages and distributed a three page joint report from the WRB & DEM. A prior report from 2004 recommended expansion of the permanent streamflow gage network and prioritized locations for that expansion. A review of the priorities was conducted in advance of the 2007 budget hearing. The new review found that both water quality and water quantity were considered in the development of the 2004 report. Given the current status of gages, the report recommended some modifications to the prioritization list of 2004. These were (1) to ensure on-going operation of two gages (Pawtuxet & Blackstone) that have or are in operation but are currently unfunded for continuation in FY2007; and (2) elevate three gage locations within the Big River Reservoir as priorities. J. Mariscal noted that USGS has generally obligated all its funds and may not have the ability to provide additional match in FY2007. The report indicated a new estimate of total costs installation and twelve months of operation of \$269,000 but J. Mariscal indicated they would be in great shape if \$242,000 were allotted. The CT accepted the report.

Richard Ribb of the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP) presented a PowerPoint presentation concerning the opportunity for the CT and the NBEP to collaborate and closely coordinate on a planning process. He noted overlaps between the state statutory requirements related to development of a systems-level plan and the NBEP requirements to update the comprehensive conservation and management plan (CCMP) for Narragansett Bay. He noted both efforts involve reporting on the state of the bay, coordination with stakeholders etc. Three key products of a collaborative process could be: (1) State of the Bay Report, (2) Plan development including stakeholder process, and (3) production of a forum based upon State of the Bay work. M. Sullivan suggested looking to URI and others with capabilities in areas such as GIS, publications as partners. R. Ribb noted the NBEP tries to do that. M. Walker noted he was still uncertain from the initial presentation who would do what under the proposal and where the gaps are. He noted good things are happening and we need to capture what's being done and it will be helpful to know in more detail what NBEP has planned. T. Uva noted while uncertain about how this proposal affect the NBEP's own charge, it clearly makes sense from the perspective of addressing CT priorities. He moved that the CT agree to work with NBEP on a collaborative planning process. Motion seconded by M. Walker. Kip Bergstrom raised the issue that prior work on scope of work for systems-level planning brought a focus to the idea of working on a watershed basis. R. Ribb agreed but noted the challenge is to execute work effectively on the smaller watershed scale while at the same time looking across the larger economic and ecosystem region. He agreed need to tap local talent and energy. M. Pryor clarified that NBEP staff would assist in the collaborative effort but represent a commitment of resources to the process. T. Uva reiterated support for the Ribb proposal and suggested the process should help show where staffing is needed to accomplish the level of desired coordination. J. Austen stated she felt this plan helped the CT address the systems-level plan but

noted the process will need to be reconciled with legislative framework. Motion passed unanimously by the CT.

Regarding topics for future meetings, in addition to Chafee-HUD work and Dr. John King, Tom Uva volunteered to develop a list of possible ideas for the next meeting.

CT scheduled their next meeting for Wednesday march 22 at 2:00 pm.

Motion to adjourn – T. Uva; second by M. Walker.

Adjourned 4:26 pm